DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 079 712 CS 000 671

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| TITLE | Children's Reading Clinic, Interim Evaluation Report for Period July 1, 1971-June 30, 1972. |
| INSTITUTION | Northwest Missouri State Coll., Maryville. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.; Missouri State Dept. of Education, Jefferson City. |
| PUB DATE | 1 Aug 72 |
| NOTE | 11p. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29 |
| DESCRIPTORS | Elementary Grades; Reading; *Reading Clinics; *Reading Diagnosis; Reading Improvement; *Reading Programs; Reading Skills; *Remedial Reading; *Retarded Readers |

ABSTRACT

In order to carry out the objective that students identified as retarded in reading will increase their reading achievement ot a predicted level based on accumulated data and diagnostic results, activities centered around three areas of concentration. (1) An exemplary program for the diagnosis of reading disabilities was established. Project area schools referred reading disability cases to the clinic on a rotating basis. Parents, school administrators, and teachers were involved in the referral procedures. Case study reports were prepared and forwarded to the principal of the referring school, and parents were notified by the clinic to make arrangements for discussing the report. (2) Remedial services were provided by members of the clinic. For an eight-week period during the summer, special remedial classes were organized. (3) In-service activities were planned according to the indicated needs of the project area schools. The findings indicated that 88 percent of the cases did increase their reading achievement above the predicted level for the period of remediation. (WR)

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HORACE MANN LEARNING CENTER
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# PROJECT TITLE: CHILDREN'S READING CLINIC
# TITLE III, ESEA, GRANT NUMBER 35-17-14-0

## INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE PERIOD:
Beginning July 1, 1971
Ending June 30, 1972

Submitted August 1, 1972

CS 000 671

RECEIVED
AUG 1 1972
TITLE III, ESEA

# EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE:

AFTER NO MORE THAN ONE ACADEMIC YEAR, AT LEAST SEVENTY-FIVE PER CENT OF THE STUDENTS IN THE AREA TO BE SERVED THAT HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED AT THE CHILDREN'S READING CLINIC AND HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS RETARDED IN READING BASED ON ALBERT J. HARRIS' FORMULA TO DETERMINE READING EXPECTANCY WITH THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN READING AGE AND MENTAL AGE BEING AT LEAST SIX MONTHS FOR CHILDREN IN GRADES FOUR AND FIVE, AND A YEAR FOR CHILDREN ABOVE THE FIFTH GRADE WILL INCREASE THEIR READING ACHIEVEMENT TO A PREDICTED LEVEL BASED ON THE ACCUMULATED DATA AND DIAGNOSTIC RESULTS. PROGRESS TOWARDS THE PREDICTED GOAL WILL BE MEASURED BY APPROPRIATE PRETESTS AND POST-TESTS.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

In order to carry out the aforementioned objective, activities were centered around three areas of concentration, each to be discussed separately.

1. Diagnostic Service

An exemplary program for the diagnosis of reading disabilities was established. Project-area schools were invited to refer reading disability cases to the clinic

on an impartial rotating basis. Parents, school administrators, and teachers were involved in the referral procedures.

The diagnostic session for each case was preceded by a parental interview. Teachers of the clients were invited to observe the diagnostic sessions. During the sessions, the children were each interviewed by a staff psychological diagnostician who administered individual tests of mental abilities as well as other tests related to behavior, interests, and self-concept. Early during each of the diagnostic sessions, the staff reading clinician administered individual diagnostic tests concerned with the reading process and its related skills. Before the conclusion of a session, a tentative decision was made as to the type of reading disability. On the basis of this tentative assessment, several remedial methods and/or materials were employed to assess their effectiveness in the solution of the problem.

Within five days of the diagnosis of each case, a staffing session was scheduled to analyze the assembled data. Again, the teacher of each involved client was invited to participate in the related staffing session.

From the compiled information on each case, case-study reports were composed. These reports included any combinations of many types of recommendations. Of most

importance to the referring schools was the information relating to the strengths and weaknesses of the child's reading, recommendations of specific methods to be employed in the remediation of the weaknesses, and the materials which were thought to be useful in carrying out the remedial instruction. For the remediation of specific weaknesses in reading, realistic behavioral objectives were detailed in such a manner that the teacher would know what to expect from a student after a specified period if certain procedures were followed. A report of each case-study was forwarded to the principal of the referring school. Parents were notified by the clinic that they could make arrangements for discussing the report with a teacher or other persons that the principal would designate.

2. Remedial Service

Staff members of the Children's Reading Clinic provided follow-up service on each case. This was accomplished in several ways. Members of the clinic staff made personal contacts with the schools in order to observe the clients in actual learning situations and to consult with the appropriate school personnel on any problems relating to each child's progress in reading. Teachers submitted regular progress reports for evaluation by the clinic staff. Telephone consultancies were conducted. Services for follow-up diagnoses were made available.

For an eight week period during the summer, special remedial classes were organized. These classes were conducted by teachers doing graduate work under the supervision of clinic personnel. Remediation at the clinic during the summer months was more extensive than would have been possible during the academic year because it was more feasible for clients to travel the long distances during that period.

3. In-Service Training

On the recommendations of the Advisory Board, which included one representative from each of the seven counties, in-service activities were planned according to the felt-needs of the project-area schools. These activities included workshops on a variety of themes in the area of reading. There were general workshops involving all schools, and there were workshops which met the needs of only a limited number of schools.

When requested, consultant services were provided for evaluating reading programs and school reading centers. Assistance was also provided in the selection of instructional materials for the teaching of reading.

The organization of the diagnostic services provided adequate opportunity for the demonstration and supervision of exemplary diagnostic procedures. The nature of the remedial services, both at the clinic and in the area schools also provided the opportunity to foster better learning situations between the clinic personnel and the

project-area school personnel.

The described in-service activities were made possible both through the utilization of the staff of the clinic and through the use of temporary consultants whose services were obtained from outside the Children's Reading Clinic.

SUMMARY OF DATA:

On the basis of the gathered data, the stated objective was successfully met. This data as well as other findings are summarized below.

1. Findings

The results of the accumulated data indicated that eighty-eight per cent of the cases included in the final analysis did increase their reading achievement above the predicted level for the period. This exceeded by thirteen percent the criterion, a minimum goal of seventy-five percent, as stated in the objective. During the period of the project covered in this report, thirty-two cases were formally diagnosed at the Children's Reading Clinic. Not all of these cases were included in the final analysis of data because of the brevity of the treatment period. Included in the final analysis of data were only those cases which had been exposed to a minimum treatment period of three months after diagnosis. This included a total of seventeen cases. No cases were excluded for any other reasons.

Because of the fact that the project was in its first year of operation, the first case was not diagnosed until the month of November which was the fifth month of this fiscal reporting period. The first months of the period were taken up in the hiring of a complete new staff, the establishment of a good public-relations base, and the formulation of administrative guidelines.

2. Additional Findings

Clinic-sponsored summer remedial classes involved thirty-four students with reading disabilities. These highly individualized classes were conducted by seventeen area teachers who were working on graduate degrees.

Enrollment in graduate elementary education courses for the summer session of 1972 increased to 243 from the summer, 1971, level of 237. This increase was evident in spite of a general decline in the enrollments of other departments. This increase, in part, can be attributed to new interests in the teaching of reading which have been fomented by the Children's Reading Clinic Project.

Three major reading workshops specifically for the project-area schools were conducted on the Northwest Missouri State University campus. Minor consultancies or visits were made to most of the project-area schools. Of these visits fourteen were for major consultancies (each approximately one-half to two days in length) or clinic-sponsored local workshops. While it was felt

that the described activities contributed greatly to the positive effects of the project, no prior-established objectives for clearly demonstrating their effectiveness were established. On the basis of the best quantitative and qualitative data available, the described in-service type activities were effective for a minimum of ninety percent of the participants. For the second project year an objective for evaluating these activities has been specified.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES:

The Advisory Board, which included a representative from each of the seven counties in the project-area held numerous meetings. A major emphasis of these meetings was the facilitation of communication between the project-area schools and the staff of the Children's Reading Clinic.

Because of the vast area in which the project-area participants were dispersed, communication with the participants was a major task. For this reason an extensive mailing list was maintained. The list was constantly revised. It exceeded 200 project-area names which included all school superintendents, all principals, key school personnel in reading, and others that had shown an interest in the project. Through this medium school personnel were constantly updated on the activities sponsored by the Children's Reading Clinic. In order to promote the

feeling that all had a part in the planning and the success of the project, minutes from the important Advisory Board meetings were disseminated.

The telephone medium was extensively utilized in the dissemination of information, especially for the purpose of teacher-staff consultancy in follow-up procedures on diagnosed cases. Dissemination activities also coupled with school-visit follow-up activities as staff members traveled to participating schools. The project-area schools were kept informed while attending the various in-service activities.

Participants in select in-service activities were requested to help in the evaluation of activities. They were asked their general opinion concerning the success of a specific activity and their ideas for its improvement. In addition they were asked to express their felt needs which might be covered in future project-sponsored activities.

The personnel of referring schools had standing invitations to come to the Children's Reading Clinic and observe model diagnostic procedures while their students were being diagnosed. The rooms utilized during the diagnostic sessions were separated from an observation corridor by two-way mirrors. Sound was transferred between the rooms electronically. These same facilities were also utilized for the observation of remediation techniques.

Referring school personnel were also encouraged to participate in the staffing sessions which concerned the students they referred.

The public was kept informed through the public-relations system of Northwest Missouri State College. This dissemination included the seven-county project area as well as other areas of the state. Media utilized were newspapers, radio, and television.

A detailed administrative guidebook for the operation of the Children's Reading Clinic Project was maintained and constantly updated. Copies of this guidebook were made available for requesting institutions.

The major reason for successful dissemination efforts was the concentration of effort placed on these activities after the realization of their importance in reaching participants dispersed in a vast seven-county area. No major obstacles were encountered. Two news releases were lost before disseminated but revised reporting procedures proved effective in remedying errors of this nature.

A need was sighted for the publication of an attractive booklet for the purpose of fostering better public understanding of the Children's Reading Clinic Project. The publication of such a booklet is projected for the second project-year. The brochure will include a pictoral story of the activities sponsored by the project. It will

have a broad dissemination that will include school personnel, parents and interested public in general.

Copies of releases for school and general-public information have been forwarded to the Missouri State Department of Education.